

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 16946

USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, UR, US, SOPN
SUBJECT: GENERAL MILSHTEYN CLAIMS U.S. WORKING FOR A
FIRST STRIKE CAPABILITY

1. IZVESTIYA OF JULY 18 PUBLISHES AN ARTICLE BY
GENERAL-LIEUTENANT MILSHTEYN OF THE USA INSTITUTE
ON THE ALLEGED MANIPULATION BY THE U.S. OF THE "SO-
CALLED 'SOVIET MILITARY THREAT'" IN ORDER TO GAIN A
ONE-SIDED ADVANTAGE OVER THE USSR AND A CHANGE IN
THE MILITARY BALANCE IN ITS FAVOR. MILSHTEYN
ADDRESSES TWO QUESTIONS IN DEVELOPING HIS THESIS:
U.S. STRATEGIC SYSTEMS AND U.S. FORWARD BASED SYSTEMS.

2. ON STRATEGIC SYSTEMS, MILSHTEYN (AS HE HAS IN
RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH ARMA) EMPHASIZES THE DANGERS
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POSED BY THE MX, WHICH HE CLAIMS WILL GIVE THE U.S.
"A COUNTERFORCE CAPABILITY AGAINST SOVIET LAND-BASED
MISSILES, I.E., THE ABILITY TO CONDUCT A 'FIRST
STRIKE.'" THE "FUROR" OVER THE ALLEGED SOVIET
DANGER, MILSHTEYN CLAIMS, IS INTENDED TO JUSTIFY
UNDERTAKING "A NEW DESTABILIZING AND DANGEROUS SYSTEM
OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS." CONCLUDING WITH THE MX (AFTER

BRIEFLY MENTIONING TRIDENT) MILSHTeyN ONCE AGAIN ATTRIBUTES ITS DEVELOPMENT TO A DESIRE BY SOME IN THE WEST TO DELIVER "A FIRST STRIKE AT OUR COUNTRY." ON FORWARD BASED SYSTEMS, MILSHTeyN SEEKS TO DRAW ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE SS-20 BY LISTING THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS AVAILABLE TO THE U.S. IN EUROPE AND ON AIRCRAFT CARRIERS. INEVITABLY, MILSHTeyN REFERS IN THIS CONTEXT TO THE NEUTRON WEAPON.

3. COMMENT: THIS ARTICLE IS AN EXTREMELY STRONG STATEMENT OF SOVIET UNEASINESS OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF U.S. ACQUISITION OF A FIRST STRIKE CAPABILITY. CLEARLY MILSHTeyN'S FIRST OBJECTIVE IS TO REFUTE CONCERNS EXPRESSED IN THE WEST OVER THE EXTENT OF THE SOVIET BUILDUP, BUT IN SO DOING HE GOES FURTHER THAN HAVE OTHER COMMENTATORS IN SPECIFYING THAT THESE CONCERNS ARE INTENDED TO MASK AND JUSTIFY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTERFORCE CAPABILITY. WHETHER MILSHTeyN'S THESIS REPRESENTS THE CURRENT SOVIET ESTIMATE OF U.S. INTENTIONS IS, OF COURSE, UNKNOWNABLE, BUT HIS ARTICLE WILL CERTAINLY CREATE UNEASINESS AMONG SOVIET READERS AND THUS REPRESENTS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SORT OF ALLEGED CAMPAIGN WHICH MILSHTeyN DECRIES AND BLAMES SOLELY ON THE WEST. MATLOCK

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